

This is Bilk # 62 for November 1994. Bilk appears bi-monthly with news on all aspects of legendary aquatic creatures, on Ufos and water, and cryptozoology in general. Subscriptions are DM 15 for Germany and Europe and DM 20 for the rest of the world. As my bank won't cash cheques without taking large provisions, please send German DM-notes - they don't usually get lost in the mail. My address still is: Ulrich Magin - Fribolinstraße 5 - 74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen, Germany

BEHEMOTH:

● Loch Ness: Among the many clippings from Inverness newspapers that Andreas Trottmann has sent me (thank you, Andreas), I quote only those with sighting reports. At the end of SEptember, the Inverness Couréeer, in the "25 Years Ago"-section, quotes a news report from Sept 26, 1969. Rupert Heaton, an angler, was 3 miles east of Fort Augustus "a short time ago" close to the Horseshoe, in the middle of the Loch off Fraser's Point, when "he noticed a very large 'V'-shaped wave break the calm surface half-a-mile east of where he was. At first it moved slowly, then gradually increased its speed to at least 20 knots, the wave by that time growing to a height of about three feet. When within only 50 yards of his boat, the 'V'- suddenly swung round in an arc and headed eastwards." On Oktober 15, 1993, the Inverness Courier reported on an American Nessie-hoax. Object of the comment was a story in the "Sun" of Canada which reported that British paratroopers had caught Nessie and held it captive in a secret underwater pen. Then, the operators of the Loch Ness submarine have been picking up unexplained noises, according to the Press & Journal of Aberdeen, August 8, 1994. "Alan Whitfield, who owns the ... mini-sub Taurus, and Gordon Swindells, have intercepted the voices from the deep on their low-frequency communications radio on three occasions. Yesterday, Alan said: 'We've been hearing singing noises from the loch that sound just like those we pick up from dolphins when we are in the sea _ ONLY Everyone knows there are no dolphins in Loch Ness'". According to Alan Whitfield, there are only two explanations: "We are either listening to seals, or else we are getting a call sign from Nessie herself." There are seals in Loch Ness, they have repeatedly been seen and photographed, also, dolphins have repeatedly been observed /in the 1910s and 1930s) in the Loch, but never confirmed (Sorry, I don't have my files here, but I have collected a number of pre-Nessie press reports on dolphins in the Loch). Also, in last Bilk, I had a report on an alleged phozograph of Nessie by tourist Paolo Rilf. As Andreas Trottmann writes: "Paolo Rilf" is an Anagramm for "April Fool"!

● Bibliography: According to a report in "Blick", the German-language Swiss tabloid, Nicolas G Hayek, boss of Swiss watchmaker Swatch, will finance a research submarine in Loch Ness. He will co-operate with Adrian Shine and Gordon Swindells. The project is to be a serious and scientific one, which will try to analyse cores from the LOch's bottom to study the earth's climatic past, although the team would also be happy to get a good snapshot of the monster. The paper quotes Adrian Shine as a believer in the monster (has he changed his mind?): "There is something unknown in the loch. We have - from time to time - found big fish with their heads bitten off - and nobody knows who killed them...Unknown creatures have survived in the Loch - not only a single Nessie, but a whole family". - clip credit goes to Luc Bürgin. Fortean Times 76 (August/September 1994) has stories on the surgeon's hoax foto of Nessie (on p. 15) and Australian sightings of Bunyips (p.38)

● Escaped exotic reptiles: The tendency for reports on escaped exotico pets in the wake of Germany's monster scare of the summer of 1994 (an escaped alligator in a gravel pit at Neuss) has continued. Just some examples: an iguana, about a yard in length, had been observed by several witnesses in the Feddersheim quarter of Worms, Germany. When witnesses spotted the iguana on a tree branch, they called the police on June 19. The fire brigade tried to catch "Wormi" in vain, it simply dropped from the branch and escaped. Sightings continued for at least a week. (Mannheimer Morgen, 25. July, p. 13; Die Rheinpfalz July 25.) While police and the fire brigade searched for a reptile missing in Worms, a 39-year-old Essen, Germany, woman had one too many. She received a parcel by mail - and when she opened it, a 60 cm/2 ft snake was inside! (Die Rheinpfalz, August 2). Meanwhile, a 86 cm (3 ft) crocodile lived, largely unnoticed by bathers, in the Rufersee in the Eifel Mountains. Late in August, children discovered its body at the lake shores - it had died of a low body temperature. Experts think that the crocodile had been exposed by its owner. It hadn't been noticed due to its non-aggressive behaviour.

(Die Rheinpfalz, August 23, 1994). France: a boa which escaped from its terrarium and into the pipes of the house in northern France returned, after a 2 month stay within the house walls, to its owner at Les-Rues-des-Vignes near Cambrai. The reptile had a length of 1.5 metres (5 ft) - Die Rheinpfalz September 9, 1994. "Sammy", the pet caiman who caused police to shut a gravel pit for bathers and start an several day hunt with rifles and helicopters, will not be returned to the owner, Jörg Zars, but remain at Cologne Zoo. (Die Rheinpfalz September 14, 1994). Just why officials border on hysteria when a tiny and tame pet caiman escapes is hard to fathom when we think of our own and local and accepted lake monsters. Just as "Sammy" was completely harmless, the pike who bit a 36-year-old Füssen man into his feet was not. The mailman was injured so seriously that he was ill for two weeks. He had taken a bath in a Füssen lake when the incident occurred (Die Rheinpfalz, July 9, 1994).

LEVIATHAN/CRYPTOZOLOGY

● Bits and notes: In Bipedia 11, June 1994, Francois de Sarre describes how, in his opinion, whales and dolphins developed from an archaic marine form of man. In Cryptozoologia, a new French CZ mag, de Sarre describes the "penguin" drawing discovered in a French cave and identifies it as a long-necked sea serpent. I do disagree with this identification, I believe the drawing shows a simple chicken. Perhaps misreading Bilk, de Sarre tells his readers I have identified the thing with a penguin, which is not true (penguins only live in Antarctica). The same article, and the same mistake, is repeated in the German magazine Mystics. (Cryptozoologia, 2, May 1994, pp. 15-16; Mystics, 4: 13, 3/1994, p. 21-22) -- A new cryptozoological enigma, a "bird with nine heads", has been observed by Chinese peasants in the south Chinese province Hunan. About 30 people told - independent of each other - that they had seen the mysterious bird. It resembles a dove (my press report gives no size, so I suppose the creature was rather small, perhaps only a genetic monster). A nine-headed bird is also mentioned in the traditions of the Song-dynasty (960-1279), the Rheinpfalz, August 13, 1994, adds. -- A sasquatch, 2,70 m/9 ft tall, has been spotted by four prospectors for petroleum at Dorsen Creek. "It was taller than a grizzly, stood erect and had long hair" Also close to Vancouver, tracks 60cm/2 ft in length have been found by investigators, says my source, a radio report by SDR 3 on September 18, 1994. It adds that within the last 170 years, Sasquatch has been spotted by 50 people, and photographed once. (So the radio station was certainly quoting an 'expert' who didn't even know of the Bord's Bigfoot Casebook). -- The HÖRZU, a traditional German family magazine, had a story on cryptozoology in issue 20, May 13, 1994, pp. 16-19. It is the usual badly researched sensationalist stuff, and mentions smilodon-reports in Africa (J.A. Jordan 1908, hippopotamus killed by sable-toothed tiger in 1958, South African cave drawing, new expedition by Eric Joy), the yeti (sightings in Malaysia and Reinhold Messner's July 21, 1986 report), dinosaurs in Africa (Lake Tele and Lake Banguelo), Moas (A. McKenzie 1880, 1978 Shoichi Hollie), Neanderthal Man (Portrait of Minnesota iceman, Almas), seaserpents (Valhalla, Cornthian, 1900 hoax stranding) and giant octopus (1897 case, film of giant octopus by French scientists in 1958 - a new case for me). -- Strange amphibian discoveries: an albino frog was discovered by two kids in Tamforth, Central England. It was brought to a zoo, where zoologist will try to see if the albino variety of Rana Temporaria will reproduce (Rheinpfalz, Sept 13, 1994) - Three-legged frogs - more than 300 of them - have appeared in a village north of Peking, according to Xinhua. Each frog weighs 10 grammes and has two front legs, but only one hind leg. They were discovered on the site of a former brick plant (Sonntag Aktuell, Sept 18, 1994) - The fossil remains of the oldest amphibian of the USA have been discovered in a swampland area (how fitting!) in Pennsylvania. The creature had a length of roughly one metre and a crocodile's tail. A detailed report by Ted Daeschler of Philadelphia has been published in Science on July 29 (Die Rheinpfalz, 30 July 1994). -

This was all for Bilk today - I still have several notes left over for the next issue. Please excuse the sloppy typing, I do only have limited time this time, and I hope I will be able to devote more time to the next issue. Please remember your news and views are always welcome - Best wishes - Ulrich